

<b>Institution:</b> Goldsmiths, University of London
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> Panel C19. Politics and International Studies
<b>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</b>

### 1.1 Unit Context

Goldsmiths' Department of Politics & International Relations (PIR) has carved out a distinctive place in the academic study of politics. We generate world-leading and impactful research, extending critical political enquiry into new domains and to meet new audiences. We challenge intellectual orthodoxies and draw insight from disciplinary fields and approaches outside mainstream political research. We pursue an idea of politics and an ethos of enquiry that is attentive to diverse cultural conditions and experiences, knowledge of which can expand the public understanding of, and participation in, politics. A commitment to equality and diversity in staffing is an integral component of our approach. We bring this idea and ethos to our collaborations with Government, NGOs, peace-building activities around the globe, as well as a variety of Think Tanks, and engaged, international academic networks.

Our commitments to challenging and enriching political enquiry drives the vitality of our research culture. We promote an environment for critical and inventive scholarship that explores political choices and opportunities, in particular, from the perspectives of political economy, post-colonial critiques, and radical political theories, foregrounding possibilities for just, transformative political action. We sustain this culture by concentrating resources on research strengths that demonstrate innovative thinking and contest disciplinary boundaries.

### 1.2 Strategic Aims

Since the last REF, we have focussed on ways to strengthen the vitality and sustainability of the department. Reflecting on the REF2014 results, we concluded that our efforts to sustain strong performances over time were hampered by over-reliance on multiple research themes without sufficient depth. We wanted to enhance the impact of our research to demonstrate the practical outcomes of our ethos, and this became a particular focus and area of improvement during this period. To deliver that vision, our broad strategic aims for 2016-20 were: to improve the quality of PIR's research outputs; increase the quantity of research grant capture; and expand opportunities to develop impact from staff research.

Accomplishing these aims demanded greater coherence in PIR's identity, which we achieved by: altering the department's name to include 'International Relations'; forming three new research clusters to represent our strengths – 'Critical Political Economy', 'Reconfiguring the International', and 'Philosophy, Ideology, and Critique' (see 1.3 below); and relinquishing or merging the weaker clusters noted in REF2014, namely in European Politics, Global Politics/International Relations, and Art and Politics. The new clusters enhance vitality by their close connections to College centres with strong public profiles – the Political Economy Research Centre and Centre for Postcolonial Studies – and to the intra-departmental Research Unit in Contemporary Political Theory (which replaces former units for Ethics & Politics, and Governance & Democracy). The clusters have successfully nurtured impact by foregrounding publicly engaged research, with two case studies selected after internal review: one each from

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Critical Political Economy and Reconfiguring the International. Consolidating expertise has therefore fulfilled part of the future strategy flagged in REF2014 but only by making a clear choice about where our strengths lie. It has also permitted us to identify types of impact that exemplify our distinctive contribution to the discipline.

### 1.3 Structure: Research Clusters, Centres and Unit

To ensure full inclusivity, each member of staff is aligned with at least one of the three clusters and its associated centres/unit. Our wider, strategic purpose here, in addition to bringing greater coherence to PIR's profile, is to enhance the integrity of our research culture: aligning resources (such as impact support, research leave, administrative support for funding applications, and future appointments) to recognised areas of strength, cultivating research intensity, dialogue and co-operation among staff in related fields, and attracting PGRs to areas where specialist support can be offered. Consequently, academic cluster leads are permanent members of the Departmental Research Committee (DRC) along with an academic Impact Lead, appointed to monitor and develop potential projects.

#### 1.3.1 Critical Political Economy

This cluster encompasses a range of disciplinary and theoretical interests unified by a concern with political economy, broadly understood. It foregrounds the cultural and political dimensions of economic activity to highlight the role of ideas, measurement devices, discourses, knowledge and power in the reproduction of capitalism. The cluster works on topics including financialisation, neoliberalism, debt and austerity, the Anthropocene, practices of capitalization, post-growth economics, and economic policy formation, and has published in numerous, highly ranked journals, including *Capital and Class*, *Theory Culture & Society*, *Competition and Change*, *New Political Economy* and *Journal of Cultural Economy*. The cluster has played a key role in substantially extending audiences for PIR's research, particularly in challenging dominant narratives of public policy and the disciplinary boundaries that support them. A central focus, for example, is a fortnightly Work in Progress seminar, where members review one another's work. A crucial means of developing shared critical and theoretical agendas, it provides doctoral, post-doctoral and Early Career Researchers (ECR) a valuable means of gaining feedback on work and learning from senior colleagues. PhD students are encouraged to take advantage of this facility when past their upgrade stage.

Alongside the cluster sits Goldsmiths' **Political Economy Research Centre (PERC)**, of which PIR's Davies is Co-Director. PERC is based in PIR but functions as an interdisciplinary network across Goldsmiths, united by a concern with critical political economy and an awareness of the cultural dimensions of economic practices. Its advisory board includes leading figures in heterodox economics and political economy who are consulted on its strategic direction and periodically invited to speak at events. Its extra-departmental network consists of 16 academic colleagues, concentrated in the Institute of Management Studies, Media, Communications & Cultural Studies, and Sociology. A graduate PERC network runs in parallel, coordinated by a PhD student in PIR, which meets for film-screenings, reading groups and work-in-progress discussions.

PERC has been a key driver in recent public discussions around the politics of political economy, bringing a distinctly critical orientation to 'economic' issues and drawing in large

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audiences. It has established a reputation for hosting public events on matters of pressing political and economic urgency, introducing heterodox and critical perspectives from a range of disciplines. These have addressed topics such as austerity, consumer and household indebtedness, the rise of right-wing populism, and the climate crisis. Speakers include Marianna Mazzucato, Wolfgang Streeck, Ann Pettifor, Philip Mirowski, and Ha-Joon Chang. All PERC affiliates have their own research projects, which they publicise and disseminate via the Centre's social media facilities.

One central research theme for the cluster has been debt, finance and austerity. During 2015, Montgomerie (now left) held an ESRC Knowledge Exchange Grant to explore everyday politics of debt. That linked academic partners at Manchester Business School, University of East London and Durham, together with civil society partners including the Centre for Responsible Credit, Debt Jubilee Campaign, and Zero-Credit. In July 2015, Montgomerie and Davies co-authored a report combining their expertise on debt, neoliberalism and mental health, *Financial Melancholia*, published by PERC. Montgomerie's ESRC Seminar Series, From Recovery to Discovery, ran over 2014-16 with a series of PERC events to look at alternatives to austerity. In 2020, PERC hosted the 12<sup>th</sup> annual Critical Finance Studies Conference. Similarly, Dutta's work challenges orthodoxies surrounding the financialisation of firms and the state's role in the rise of finance; he is a co-founder, together with Warwick University, of the Critical Finance Group, whose 2019 conference was hosted at Goldsmiths and resulted in a special issue of *Finance and Society*. Finally, Ivanova's work on monetary policy responses to the financial crisis (including a comparison to those during the Great Depression) also contributed to this strand of research.

A second theme concerns the history and application of neoliberal thought, in both economics and management. Davies's three monographs – *The Limits of Neoliberalism* (2014), *The Happiness Industry* (2015) and *Nervous States* (2018) – have contributed to international scholarly and public understanding of economic concepts (including those associated with neoliberal traditions) and to contemporary policy making and management. Dutta has conducted research on the history of new public management, finding origins of neoliberal public sector reforms in Cold War planning techniques. Griffiths has published a monograph on the thought of Friedrich Hayek, while Ivanova's work on the history of economics explores Austrian economic thinking. This theme also provides a valuable environment for a PhD student, Ibled, who works on the history of neoliberal thought.

Finally, the cluster has a strong interest in green political economy and the Anthropocene. PERC is partner in the ESRC Centre for Understanding Sustainable Prosperity (CUSP), which funded a three-year post-doctoral fellowship (Taylor) and a PhD studentship (Douglas). PERC researchers contribute variously to CUSP, including Taylor's research on professional understanding of risk and uncertainty, Davies's exploration of the moral dimensions of prosperity, and Douglas's doctoral research on the 'limits to growth' debate. CUSP has enabled PERC to develop its own sphere of research activities in relation to sustainability, including a public reading group on the Anthropocene, from which a series of book reviews by participants were published, and a speaker series of leading eco-socialist scholars. PERC and CUSP held a major conference in summer 2019, on Risk, Uncertainty, and the Anthropocene, with prestigious international speakers. These engagements led Taylor and Davies to divert their research attention towards ecological themes, also shared by other contributors to the cluster.

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### 1.3.2 Reconfiguring the International

The mission of this cluster is to reconfigure the ways that ‘the international’ and ‘the global’ are conceived and investigated within the discipline. It does so, first, by bringing together staff who, in attending to ‘the international’, focus not principally on ‘the West’ but on what is mistakenly treated as derivative or marginal (‘the Rest’). Researchers in the cluster investigate the culture and politics of Asia (Pandey, Seth, Dutton, Brenner), Africa (Ibreck), Latin America (Carballo), the Middle East (Mura, Sadeghi-Boroujerdi), and the Balkans (Dragovic-Soso); in doing so, they show how non-Eurocentric approaches lead to a richer understanding of the ‘international’, one distinctly attentive to its diversity. Second, the cluster’s work has a strong and cutting-edge theoretical inclination, drawing upon and developing postcolonial and decolonial theory, poststructuralism, and feminism. The cluster has been vital in meeting our strategic goals of increasing successful grant capture (see below, 3.1) and improving the quality of our research outputs (particularly in new appointments, such as Brenner, Tazzioli, and Sadeghi-Boroujerdi). It has also played an important role in developing new collaborations with scholars, artists, and civil society bodies (see below, 4.1-2).

Themes and issues explored usually cut across national divides, challenging the nation-state ontology underpinning much of the work undertaken within the discipline, not least in International Relations. These include: the politics of knowledge (Seth, Carballo); memory, justice and truth commissions (Dragovic-Soso, Seth and Ibreck); cartography and counter-mapping (D Martin); gender and power (Pandey and Evans); violence, conflict and identity (Brenner, Seth); nationalism (Seth, Dragovic Soso, Ibreck, Brenner, Carballo); the relations between art and politics (Buckley, Dutton); comparative political theory (Sadeghi-Boroujerdi, Mura, Seth); and the influence of cosmologies and religion (and of culture generally) in shaping how politics and power are understood, practiced, and challenged (Pandey, Mura, Sadeghi-Boroujerdi, Seth). The cluster provides a common forum for diverse research interests, drawing attention to numerous, emergent sites of resistance and possibilities for just transformations: Ibreck and Brenner, for example, study borderlands where state authority and legal jurisdiction break down, in Southeast Asia and Africa; and Tazzioli studies the porousness of European borders and efforts to ‘manage’ migration and refugees. Ibreck’s innovative work in Sudan provides one of our Impact Case Studies.

Members of the cluster have published books with major publishers: Cornell University Press (Brenner), Zed (Ibreck), University of Hawaii Press (Pandey), Cambridge University Press (Sadeghi-Boroujerdi), Oxford University Press (Seth), Sage, and Rowman and Littlefield (Tazzioli). Seth’s essays are scheduled for publication in Portuguese translation as a book, *História e Pós-colonialismo*. The cluster’s researchers have been invited to give 12 prestigious keynote speeches (see 4.2), two are on peer review panels (Seth, Ibreck), four serve on the board of journals (Dutton, Dragovic-Soso, Seth and Pandey), including *International Political Sociology* and *American Political Science Review*, and four edit book series (Dragovic-Soso, Dutton, Sadeghi-Boroujerdi and Seth).

The Goldsmiths **Centre for Postcolonial Studies (CPS)** is the primary medium for this cluster’s public activities and collaborations. It is led by Seth, with Carballo and D Martin as deputy directors; the three are UK editors of the international journal, *Postcolonial Studies*, and editors of a four-volume reference collection, *Postcolonial Politics* (both Taylor & Francis), underscoring CPS’s status as a key hub in the wider international network of postcolonial scholarship. The

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centre draws its advisory board from international scholars around the world. Through these connections CPS members have participated in several joint research funding applications and have won a number of funding awards: e.g. Brenner's (PI) Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF); Seth (PI) & Brenner's (CI) AHRC award for projects on non-state education in Myanmar, which brings educators and activists from Myanmar's border regions into conversation with scholars; Seth's (PI) ESRC-AHRC project which brings scholars from Japan and the UK together to explore ethnic conflict and violence in South and Southeast Asia; Pandey's BA-Leverhulme small grant to investigate constructions of gender and the body in medieval Japan; Ibreck's (PI) two GCRF awards on regional justice in Eastern Africa and her SSRC award for a project on governance and conflict in South Sudan, which develop a unique approach to collaborative ethnography, directly engaging more than 50 civic activists as co-researchers, in South Sudan but also from surrounding countries including Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia and Uganda; Seth, D Martin and Carballo's collaborative French Agence National de Recherche (ANR) grant for a European Research Network on Europe in a Networked World; and Tazzioli's collaborative ESRC project on how financial and digital technologies are transforming refugee governance and refugee lives, her BA small grant on the implementation and use of digital technologies in refugee governance in Greece, and a Cherish-de Escalator Grant exploring how migrants use digital technologies in the ex-jungle of Calais, and how activists and NGOs devise technologies and digital mapping programmes to support the migrants stranded there.

Public facing activities to reach new audiences are central to the centre's remit and, in the period covered, it ran visiting speaker series with lectures by distinguished scholars from the UK and abroad; hosted four externally-funded visiting researchers (from Denmark, Germany, Belgium, and Switzerland); ran three major seminar series (on Comparative Political Theory; Islamicaes; Latin American Scholarship); organised a workshop on Decolonising Knowledge with Linnaeus University in 2015; and hosted a film festival on political documentaries, titled Films from the Underside in 2015. In 2020 it launched a dedicated website – [postcolonialpolitics.org](http://postcolonialpolitics.org) – to debate pressing issues concerning, especially, the Global South.

**1.3.3 Philosophy, Ideology, and Critique**

Exploring radical philosophies and political theories that challenge orthodoxies associated with mainstream liberal thought is a longstanding research theme in PIR. This third, smaller cluster comprises staff working on ideas and theories that critique the parameters of modern statehood, formal citizenship, and rational, secular modes of political engagement. Particular strengths include innovative historical and conceptual analyses of post-anarchism (Levy, Newman), Western and non-Western 'political theologies' (Newman, Mura, Sadeghi-Boroujerdi), and new feminisms and the politics of sexuality in non-Western cultural contexts (Evans, Pandey). Giving space to explore critical and sometimes provocative types of political thinking is the cluster's contribution to PIR's research vitality. For example, shared expertise in psychoanalytical approaches to politics (Mura, J Martin, Newman) led to a department-wide reading group with post-graduates on Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* in early 2020. Additionally, in 2020 Newman and J Martin initiated a joint project exploring theological ideas, including a public seminar series on the sacred in contemporary politics. Other notable achievements in this exercise include: publication of six monographs exploring radical intellectual traditions (two by Newman and one each by Evans, Griffiths, J Martin and Sadeghi-Boroujerdi), and two major edited collections on anarchism (by Levy, and Levy & Newman), with publishers including

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Cambridge University Press, Polity, Palgrave and Routledge; editorship of two journal special issues (Evans, J Martin); journal editor roles for *European Journal of Politics and Gender* (Evans) and *Contemporary Political Theory* (J Martin); and editorial board membership (Evans, Levy, J Martin, Newman). J Martin co-edits an international book series on Rhetoric, Politics and Society with Palgrave, and Newman co-edits the series *The New Politics of Autonomy* with Rowman & Littlefield International. Visiting professor roles were taken up by Newman at the universities of Ljubljana (2015), Paraiba, Brazil (2016), Sydney (2018), McQuarrie and UNSW (2019-20), and by Evans at the University of Lausanne (2018-20). Evans is co-PI on a Government Equalities Office project on disabilities and political representation (2018-20); and Levy co-presented research to the Home Office in its History & Policy series (2014).

The **Research Unit in Contemporary Political Theory (RUCPT)** replaced the Research Unit in Politics and Ethics (RUPE, led by Newman) in 2015. It serves as a platform for the cluster and offers a resource for PGRs working on recent trends in political theory and philosophy. Both units' speaker series included eminent critical thinkers such as Profs John Lechte (2014 and 2019), Roberto Esposito (2015) and Franco Berardi (2016). In 2014 one-day conferences were run on the legacy of Max Stirner and (alongside the CPS and the PSA Anarchism Specialist Group) on Anarchism and the Postcolonial Turn, with speakers from PIR (Newman and Levy) and other institutions. Aware of the comparatively minimal scale of its affiliates RUCPT (led by Newman and J Martin) has purposefully adopted a 'developmental' strategy to cultivate theoretical projects. It has hosted presentations of ongoing research by staff members (including a book launch of Newman's monograph, *Political Theology*), PhD presentations, and provided a focus for specifically PGR interests such as an article writing workshop in 2017 and a one-day symposium on Politics and Ontology held in collaboration with the University of Kent Centre for Critical Thought in 2018.

### 1.4 Future Aims and Goals

PIR's research strategy began a process of renewal in January 2020. A departmental away-day was held to discuss its broad direction and, following a further strategic review in March, we also had the input of an external academic team. Detailed specification of the strategy is delayed by the pandemic crisis, but it will retain our orientation towards critical and innovative research, and the current cluster structure, which support the vitality of our environment.

To address sustainability, however, we need significantly to expand our profile within and beyond the discipline in order to enhance our public presence and, moreover, to further realise our guiding ethos – demonstrating the value to political enquiry of challenging the mainstream and foregrounding cultural diversity. Our ambition is therefore to increase research partnerships and collaborations with academic and non-academic partners, particularly by highlighting the practical and methodological value of our work. That will involve eliciting the *transferable* components of critical and heterodox approaches in our clusters in response to current and pressing issues. We will achieve this, in part, through collective reflection in cluster workshops, utilising existing skills and collaborative experience, and learning from impact activities undertaken in this REF. But we will also develop the role of the Departmental Research Committee and the Research Administrator to prioritise and promote impact opportunities, funding calls that include support for PGR projects with distinct methodological approaches, and dissemination strategies highlighting practical benefits and wider 'applications' to our insights.

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Additionally, we will seek greater recognition by external performance measures of our research profile so as to strengthen our reputational basis for attracting funding and PGRs. We will also develop in-house doctoral training to direct cluster expertise towards sustaining a more specialist PGR environment.

Finally, we are aware that potential 'sub-clusters' exist in the areas of the politics of memory and justice, psychoanalytic approaches to politics, immigration, technology, and art and politics. We will monitor the possibilities for enhancement in these fields, particularly if they contribute to developing practical and methodologically oriented research insights.

## 2. People

### 2.1 Staffing strategy and staff development

Since REF2014 PIR's staff profile has changed considerably and intentionally. This was to strengthen our research identity and to build on the commitment to equality and diversity underpinning the vitality of our research culture generally. Of the total researchers submitted (including two at 0.5 FTE, one at .4 FTE), eight are new members of staff, with expertise in comparative political theory (Mura, Sadeghi), critical political economy (Dutta) and international politics (Ibreck, Brenner, Tazzioli, Carballo, Evans), matching identified areas of strength. Although all staff associate with at least one cluster, they are not expected to pursue research in exclusively one alone. Recent appointments have also been made to maximise impact opportunities and experience (e.g. Tazzioli, Ibreck). Of our eight most recent appointments, three had impact case studies under consideration and all are actively involved in knowledge exchange activities.

Ongoing support for research staff in the department takes several forms. First, staff undertake an annual appraisal with the Head of Department (HoD) where individual accomplishments and needs are identified, and support discussed. Second, the department utilises and shares a transparent workload model to ensure balance between various roles, enabling staff to anticipate how to devote time to research. Workload adjustments are made in light of specific circumstances and research needs, such as fieldwork, finishing a book project, or pursuing impact-related activity. Third, there are opportunities for research leave, training, and participation in research activity at Goldsmiths or externally.

### 2.2 Research Time

Recognising that, in HE, research opportunities are not always distributed equally and that, for various reasons, female, BAME and junior members of staff, in particular, are structurally disadvantaged, PIR has sought in different ways to enable staff across career stages to find time for research. On occasion, that is to make up for lost opportunities because of heavy workloads (which have resulted in exclusions from previous REFs). We use a 'fair workloads' scheme giving staff opportunities to do research or to contribute to the wider research culture. All staff benefit from flexible, remote working, and home working is particularly supported for those with caring responsibilities. Additionally, four have been granted leave to take up visiting fellowships at other institutions. Five have taken maternity or paternity leave and were fully supported on their return, two using Keeping-in-Touch (KIT) days to ease them back into the

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working environment and benefiting from adjusted workloads. Two staff have successfully requested reduced fractional contracts or unpaid leave for personal or health reasons.

PIR also operates a transparent policy of sabbatical leave in line with the Goldsmiths research strategy. The now current system was recognised in our 2016-20 strategy document as an integral device for prioritising production of outputs and funding applications. All research-active staff are eligible for a term's research leave after nine successive teaching terms. Staff are regularly reminded of the process: after initial discussion with the HoD, applicants propose a research plan (including detail on outputs, grant applications, impact-related activity), which is then discussed in the DRC. The DRC reports back to the applicant, possibly with suggestions or requiring changes to be made to the plan. Revised applications are then reviewed and endorsed by the HoD and submitted for consideration and approval by the College Research and Enterprise Committee (REC). This provision is offered in addition to any leave achieved through grant buy-out. Applying for funding is not a prerequisite for approving sabbatical leave, since staff may be at different stages of their careers and have varying research needs. But applications are encouraged since they promote an active research culture by clarifying projects and encouraging sharing and planning of work. Normally, two to three staff are given a term's research leave in any academic year. In 2017-20, four professors (J Martin, Seth, Newman and Davies) and four lecturers (Gunn, Buckley, D Martin and Ivanova) were awarded sabbaticals. In all cases, specified outputs were either significantly progressed or completed.

### 2.3 Mentoring and Staff Development

In keeping with the College's commitment, in its Concordat, to 'develop' researchers, PIR encourages staff to adapt and extend their personal skills. All ECRs are provided an individual mentor, who is a senior staff member, to guide and advise them in the initial stages of their careers. Mentors meet regularly with ECRs and include them in their networks and events. They are allocated by the HoD in line with expertise and aptitude. All professors are expected to be involved in such mentoring, with some (Davies, Seth) having more than one mentee.

Furthermore, staff are encouraged to undertake training offered by the College Research Office, and to organise and attend specialist conferences and workshops. Practical experience of organising academic events and associations is beneficial for developing networking skills, undertaking knowledge exchange, instigating collaborations, and managing academic research. So, in addition to the work of Davies and Seth in their respective centres: J Martin convened the PSA Specialist Group for Rhetoric, Discourse and Politics (2010-20); Levy was organiser for the Association for the Study of Modern Italy annual conference in 2016 and 2019, and ran the Modern Italian History Seminar in 1996-2016; and Evans was co-convenor of the PSA Women and Politics Group (2012-2015) and convenor of the European Standing Group of Politics and Gender (2013-18).

PIR held three departmental research away-days and several smaller, research-related events since 2014, with a conscious emphasis on collectively defining strategic goals and generating dialogue among its clusters. These are moments for staff to discuss and value each other's research and update others of their plans. They are opportunities to celebrate research activity and craft strategic priorities. External speakers, for example from the REC, are invited to lead sessions about the shifting grant income landscape, REF, impact, or knowledge exchange. Individual staff also offer their expertise as a training opportunity (e.g. a session on writing grant



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proposals offered by Montgomerie and Evans). In addition to the centres' and units' activities, the department holds research events for its staff: a Department Research Seminar, which includes presentations by staff awarded research leave, and book launches to celebrate particular achievements. For example, in 2018 J Martin publicly interviewed Davies about his monograph, *Nervous States*, and in 2019 public launches were held for books by Ibreck, Tazzioli and Brenner.

### 2.4 Internal Research Funds and Administrative Support

Each member of academic staff has an annual personal research allowance (£800), allocated also on a proportional basis to staff on fractional contracts. This supports personal research activities where other resource is unavailable, including membership of professional organisations and conference funding, fieldwork travel, or research materials. If funds remain unspent, they can assist staff whose costs are higher (e.g. due to undertaking fieldwork in more distant parts of the globe).

Each Centre and Unit is funded by the department (£2000 pa), with PERC also receiving funds from the College and other collaborating departments.

Since 2018, as part of its strategy PIR has employed a Research Administrator (RA) to support the department (in conference and workshop organisation, impact activity, grant applications), a post raised to full-time in September 2019 that has significantly improved the management of research. Whereas in the past research activity was hampered by insufficient support, the RA – who is secretary to the DRC – has improved sustainability by supplying technical advice, coordinating College services, and managing information flow (see 3.1-2).

### 2.5 PGR Students

Doctoral research plays a substantial role in the vitality of PIR and is an increasingly important part of our strategy to sustain and develop our ethos. We currently have 26 PGR students, with 13 PhDs awarded since 2013-14 (incl.) – around a 20% increase in submission since 2008-12 – four recent submissions and three more about to submit. Because of its interdisciplinary, cultural orientation PIR has succeeded in winning CHASE funding for PhD projects; and one in the period covered was awarded ESRC funding. At least one PGR per year is awarded a CHASE scholarship, sometimes two or three. Two have recently undertaken paid CHASE work placements. While paid studentships within the department have not been available for several years, we are currently considering a departmentally funded BAME scholarship, in recognition of the alarming scarcity of BAME academics across the sector.

Across this period, we have had a number of outstanding researchers, many attracted to the department's heterodox and interdisciplinary profile. There is a lively culture of self-organisation among PGRs, typical of Goldsmiths and strongly encouraged because it creates solidarity and provokes intellectual enquiry: in PIR this culture currently includes PhD-only 'work in progress' seminars and a number of reading groups, a PhD Film Club, as well as contributions to the PERC blog and participation in the recently formed PERC Graduate Network.

All staff undergo training in PGR supervision processes by Goldsmiths Graduate School and also acquire guidance on student-facing sessions. This training discusses good practice and

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potential pitfalls; and it provides valuable suggestions, particularly to new supervisors. Every research student is assigned two supervisors to advise on their topic, which is assessed initially by the PhD convenor and a potential 'first' (or primary) supervisor. PGRs may then opt to have only one supervisor, or one primarily, who meet twice a term (at a minimum). A short transcript of each session is completed by both, then submitted online for College monitoring. A review of progress in the first six months is made for all first-year research students and annual reviews for all PGRs are undertaken later in the year to track progress. An 'upgrade' from MPhil to PhD status is held between 18-24 months (FT) or 36-48 months (PT) after commencement, to ensure the viability of the project. This is attended by the student and two (non-supervising) PIR staff. The Postgraduate Committee monitors and advises the DRC on the progress and completion of all PGRs.

Attention to the developing needs and skills of doctoral students is central to their progress and PIR's strategy has compelled significant developments in this regard. The DRC now includes among its membership the PhD convenor (an academic member of staff) and a student PGR representative. PIR hosts an annual Politics PhD Conference in April, attended by its staff and research students. It is co-organised by PGRs and the PhD convenor and, in addition to presenting research (normally in their second year of study), students serve as chairs and participants. The conference enables PGRs to acquire presentation skills, as well as receive questions and comments from a broad audience rather than their supervisors alone. Additionally, the Graduate School holds a general annual PhD conference and all PGRs are required to attend and present work at least once during their period of study.

PGRs will typically undertake training in qualitative and quantitative methods in their first year of studies via Graduate School provision. This is compulsory for all ESRC-funded students. In the past, PhD recruitment often reflected individual supervisor interests. More recently, we have encouraged applications (particularly funded projects) that relate to the clusters and the Centres/Unit where expertise is concentrated, underscoring the importance of 'pools' of shared research interests to create a more dialogical environment. Our ambition is to enhance this by developing and delivering in-house doctoral training that mirrors our strengths and so better sustains our research culture.

PGRs benefit from support in terms of space and funding for fieldwork, within the constraints of the College and department. They are allocated desk space and computers in two open-plan offices. Those PGRs undertaking fieldwork abroad have applied successfully for funding from the College and external bodies, with additional contributions by the department, where feasible. Research students are frequently keen to gain teaching and assessment experience, which we offer on undergraduate modules. Just under half the PGRs who graduated in the period covered have gone on to specialist research and/or careers in academia – two current members of PIR staff (Evans and Tazzioli) are former PhDs students with us.

### 2.6 Equality and Diversity

Our strategic focus on heterogeneity in politics supports a concern to ensure equality and diversity in staffing so as to enable shared 'ownership' of our research profile. Of 19 permanent research-active members of staff, seven are women and five are of ethnic minority or mixed background; more than half are not British-born. Since 2019-20, its senior academics (seven Professors, two Readers) include three women and two BAME scholars. Of the last seven

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academics hired since 2015, six have protected characteristics. As our REF submission demonstrates, around a third of our highest internally ranked outputs are from female members of staff – which is approximate to their representation in PIR as a whole.

In making preparations for the REF, we felt it necessary that all staff could participate in the process. Our strategy's development involved collective 'away days', cluster meetings, and regular consultations with cluster leads following their group discussions. In addition to annually reviewing individual research needs, draft documentation (and regular updates) for the submission were made available, and staff were invited to comment.

Four processes of internal review of potential output selections were undertaken in the period covered. Reviewers were appointed with clusters in mind and purposefully included staff in a mix of sex, ethnicity, and with ECRs paired with more senior staff. An experienced external academic reviewer was also appointed. Reviewers followed College advice on the secure management of sensitive data and received guidance and training on unconscious bias. Finally, reviewers' scores and comments on outputs were disclosed to staff individually, and staff were encouraged to indicate any unfair obstacles to making a contribution.

### 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

#### 3.1 Income

PIR's strategy aimed to increase research income by expanding the number of funding applications over the long term, doing so principally from within clusters so as to cohere with our emerging profile. This was to be achieved by purposefully recruiting staff with innovative approaches, established research records, and potential for impact; deliberately using clusters as a medium to elaborate projects, invite collaborations, read draft applications, share advice on impact; and using a Research Administrator (RA) to personally advise staff on sources of funding, promote and assist in writing applications, share good practice gleaned from the College network of RAs, and mediate with College services (such as Finance). Our wider objective was to fashion an efficient and supportive environment for sustaining income generation across the breadth of PIR staff (not only isolated 'star performers') into the future.

The adopted measures have resulted in a higher quantity of medium-to-large applications (an average of eight per year over 2016-20) and a wider range of application types (such as: small and large grants, grants for collaborative work, and applications to specified schemes by Research Councils), as well as joint bids among staff – both senior and recently appointed – with overlapping expertise. Total levels of grant income increased substantially from £93k in 2013-14, to £97k 2016-17 and £140k in 2018-19. Additionally, income has increased from sources other than UK Research Councils such as the EU, the US (from £0 in 2013-14 to £17k in 2018-19) and, notably in the case of new and recent appointments, from the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF).

Grant capture over the period aligns with membership of research clusters. For example:

- Critical Political Economy

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ESRC funding for Interrogating the Dashboard (Davies, CI, 2014-16); Knowledge Exchange Grant for Everyday Politics of Debt (Montgomerie, PI, former staff, 2015); and the seminar series, From Recovery to Discovery (Montgomerie, PI). Davies is also CI on the ESRC Centre for Understanding Sustainable Prosperity (CUSP), a five-year large grant that includes a full PhD studentship and post-doctoral post.

- Reconfiguring the International

An AHRC-funded project Non-State Education and Conflict in Myanmar (Seth and Brenner, PI and CI, 2018); the ESRC-AHRC funded project Ethnicity, Religion, Conflict and Violence in Postcolonial South and Southeast Asia: A Comparative, Interdisciplinary Study (Seth, PI, 2018); and a GCRF award for Economic Development and Ethnic Conflict in Myanmar's Borderlands (Brenner, PI, 2018) and two on Regional justice networks in Eastern Africa (Ibreck, PI, 2018, 2019). Ibreck is recipient of SSRC funds for her project Research and policy analysis on the logics of governance and experiences of conflict in South Sudan (2018) and of Democratization, Diversity, State Fragility and Gender (The Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute, 2019). Tazzioli is CI on a recently awarded ESRC grant on Financial Inclusion and Digital Connectivity in Refugee Governance which started in January 2020.

- Philosophy, Ideology and Critique

Evans is CI on a project funded by the UK Government Equalities Office on Barriers to Political Representation: Disability and the EnAble Fund. In 2014-15 J Martin completed a two-year Leverhulme Research Fellowship on Affective Strategies in Political Rhetoric.

### 3.2 Infrastructure and Facilities

The primary infrastructure for monitoring the quantity and quality of research applications is the Departmental Research Committee, which looks at all applications prior to signing off by the HoD (in order to ensure quality but also assess cost implications for the department and note ethics issues). Before applications come to the DRC, the RA discusses a project with the applicant, advises on scheme requirements, and thereafter ensures that the sequence of key stages in the process is followed in a timely fashion. The DRC also sets and monitors general research priorities in PIR, discussing how to allocate support (such as sabbaticals) and resources (such as available room space, IT equipment, or small funds).

The department's Director of Research (DoR, who is chair of the DRC) attends the wider College forum for Directors of Research, led by the REC, which meets twice a term. That way, DRC policies are informed by broader policy initiatives. Regular information updates, advice on policy changes and informal dialogue on best practice are disseminated through these meetings. They permit PIR to pursue the integrity and sustainability of its research culture by remaining alert to broader developments and initiatives in other discipline areas. Regular dialogue with REC originally prompted PIR to develop its 2016-20 strategy, to consider the longer-term possibilities of new recruitment for refocussing and managing a renewed research profile, and to consider enhancing research vitality as a driver for further development.

To sharpen our research profile, one of our priorities is to project PIR's vitality to wider audiences in order to harness interest from potential partners and impact beneficiaries, funders,

## Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

and PGRs; and via media that appeals to people attracted to critical, cultural interventions in contemporary debates. PIR therefore has its own web pages, which document particular research highlights by staff in a research blog. It also has a Facebook site (with 1400 followers) and a Twitter account (as do nine individual staff). Each of the two Centres and the Research Unit has a dedicated web site to publicise its activities and to enable access to events (such as digital attendance registration). PERC, for example, has been exemplary in this regard, given its focus on current issues in political and economic life. Its Twitter account has over 5.5k followers and it utilises a mailing list with 1800 members. These resources are crucial in establishing PERC's presence as one of the leading public-facing political economy centres in the UK.

### 4. Collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society

#### 4.1 Collaborations, Networks and Partnerships

PIR researchers address the questions, problems and experiences in domestic and international political life, and particularly the wider cultures of politics that lie beneath or beyond the preoccupations of public authorities. This focus exemplifies our view that heterodox thinking and cultural diversity can critically illuminate political disputes and forge new paths to just settlements. We have therefore encouraged engagements with audiences especially receptive to the critique of dominant policy frameworks and open to the prospect of radical social and political transformation. That includes academic specialists and stakeholders in the fields of political economy, postcolonial scholarship, and radical political theory, as well as related associations and networks, and the wider public. From such engagements we have opened up new debates so as to challenge orthodoxies, hear and discuss alternative perspectives from a range of disciplines, and test ideas in development.

Because of their concentration of resources and expertise, the two Centres have played the major role in pursuing these engagements.

PERC, for example, regularly facilitates dialogue between academics and stakeholders from the world of policy, civil society and student communities. These talks are recorded and uploaded to Soundcloud and YouTube for a general audience. For example, in March 2017 it hosted *Rethinking Capitalism*, which was filmed and shared on social media channels. This event, introduced by Taylor, saw Mariana Mazzucato and Michael Jacobs presenting joint work on structural economic reform, and engaging in dialogue with environmental economist, Tim Jackson, on its implications. PERC also fosters international networks, hosting Visiting Fellows from Turkey, Denmark and South Korea. Its researchers contribute to media debates and engage with policy think tanks. Davies, for example, writes frequently for publications including *London Review of Books*, *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*, and has discussed his work on anti-expert politics at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the European Parliament; Dutta has contributed writing to the Institute for Public Policy Research and sits on the board of the new think tank, Commonwealth, which explores democratic ownership models – he is also a member of the Politics of Money research network, funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG, or *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*); Taylor works closely with the Institute for Actuaries to explore how risk models can adapt to existential threats of ecological change. PERC has collaborated with New School Economics (NSE), an undergraduate student society established by Goldsmiths' students and part of the

## Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

Rethinking Economics national network, to respond to the 2008 economic crisis with a call for greater pluralism in economics. It supports NSE with funding and publicity, making the PERC blog available to students to report on conferences, write reviews, and share information and videos from their annual conference.

CPS engages its audiences primarily by acting as a medium of cultural and intellectual exploration; 'culture' here serving as the repository for the multiple modes by which predominantly non-Western experiences are captured and challenge received norms in national and international politics. The Centre is closely linked to the network of postcolonial institutes around the world and participates in a consortium with them in research collaborations and funding bids. For example, Seth's contribution to a project with other scholars of postcolonialism at the New University of Lisbon; and D Martin is a founding member of E-NeW (Europe in a Networked World), a multi-partner network aimed at promoting the creative work of immigrant and postcolonial communities across Europe. CPS adopts a distinctively cross-disciplinary approach to its activities – collaborating at Goldsmiths with the departments of Music and of English, for example – and addresses, in particular, academic audiences and PGRs, artists and non-academic publics interested in the legacies of colonialism. It also hosts artists in residence and visiting researchers from around the world.

### 4.2 Wider Audiences

Individual staff also engage in networks and make contributions that utilise their particular research expertise. These efforts realise our strategic objective of expanding the public understanding of politics and promoting forms of participation. They include working with NGOs and charities dealing with major conflicts, local councils, public institutes and professional communities.

For example, specialist knowledge based on long-term, close observation of political processes has brought recognition for a number of staff. We regard this recognition as an important mechanism to demonstrate and circulate our research ethos. As a leading expert and advisor in the politics of Post-Yugoslav States, Dragovic-Soso sustains long-term partnerships with organisations in the field. In the period covered, she has served as presenter and participant on the International Fora on Transitional Justice in the Post-Yugoslav States organized by the Coalition for a Regional Commission Tasked with Establishing the Facts about All Victims of War Crimes and Other Serious Human Rights Violations Committed on the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia in the period from 1991-2001 (RECOM), hosted at various locations in the Western Balkans. The audiences have included 200+ people from local and international NGOs, victim associations, government and public servants from the region, and representatives from the EU, and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). In 2015 she participated in a closed workshop at St Anthony's College, University of Oxford, that brought together academics and representatives of UK government, NGOs and the international organisations on Bosnia and Herzegovina: New International thinking, an event that resulted in a policy document. In 2017 she was invited to take part in a scoping roundtable on media and democracy in the Western Balkans at the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Since 2018 Dragovic-Soso has been adviser to the UK charity, Remembering Srebrenica, and has advised on the Legacies of Conflict strand of the 2018 Western Balkans summit held in London, also at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

## Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

Likewise, Ibreck has developed partnerships with various organisations – such as the DefendDefenders: the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project; Justice Africa; South Sudan Law Society; Community Empowerment for Progress Organisation (South Sudan) – and served as an advisory panel member on Christian Aid project: Civil society resistance to land grabs in Columbia, Sierra Leone, Angola, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and their *Land Matters* report (2014-15).

More generally, staff expertise has been a channel to academic collaborations and contributions with public institutions across civil society. Buckley has served as Evidence Expert for the All-Party Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into Building Resilience to Radicalisation (2017) and advises on the NGOs, Culture + Conflict and Artraker, and is academic advisor to the Tate Modern Research Centre: Learning, and the Whitney Museum of Art in New York. Griffiths serves as an advisor to the Lewisham Democracy Commission. J Martin's work on rhetoric brought his participation in an AHRC seminar series on The Crisis of Political Rhetoric, directly engaging speechwriters, politicians and academics. He is also a scholar of the British Psychoanalytic Council and participates in its Politics from the Couch seminars (2019-), which connects clinicians and academics in order to develop joint research projects. Finally, Davies' ESRC project on Funding the Dashboard was partnered with the think-tank, Demos.

In addition to the five journal editor roles and eight editorial board memberships already noted (in 1.3.1-3), seven staff have given keynote speeches in the UK and around the world:

- Evans – Aalborg University, Denmark (2016)
- Dragovic-Soso – University of Belgrade, Serbia (2015)
- Dutton – Oz/Asia Festival, Australia (2014) and the Beijing Foreign Languages University, China (2015)
- Levy – German Historical Institute in Rome (2016)
- D Martin – BISA Postcolonial & Decolonial junior researcher event, Brighton (2017)
- J Martin – University of Oslo, Norway (2018)
- Pandey – University of Helsinki, Finland (2016), and in the US: Stanford University (2017), Dartmouth College (2018), UCLA (2019)
- Seth – Humboldt University, Berlin (2015), Ouro Preto, Brazil (2016), UK Political Studies Association conference, Cardiff (2018), and Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts (2019)

To share new knowledge and understanding, but also to set out unorthodox ideas that run counter to the mainstream, PIR staff frequently speak to the media, who approach us for our expertise and our critical perspectives. Davies' regular contributions to public debate have been noted above and form one of our Impact Case Studies. His political commentary attracts such broad attention as to be republished in book form by Verso as *This is Not Normal* (2020). In 2015 Dragovic-Soso was interviewee/participant in a three-hour documentary on Milovan Djilas, aired in three episodes on Radio Television Serbia. In 2016 she commented all day on BBC World and the BBC News Channel on the judgment of Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadžić, by the ICTY. She also contributed commentary on Karadžić to the web-based news platform, *The Conversation*. Additionally, J Martin participated in a 2020 report in the *Huffington Post* on the language of political leaders during the early Covid-19 pandemic; and D Martin, Carballo and Seth co-wrote a contribution to the online site, *openDemocracy*, on colonialism, slavery and Empire in light of 2020's protests around race.

**Unit-level environment template (REF5b)**

These contributions and interventions reflect PIR's strategic aspiration to shape the public understanding of politics. In responding to unfolding crises and disputes in contemporary life they exemplify a multi-stranded, practical dimension to our research ethos on which to build in the future. Our ambition is to sustain this vibrant connection to events, making it an engine for enhancing our research vitality and generating further partnerships and collaborations.